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Economic sector major group: transport

Multi-stakeholder dialogue on sustainable energy and transport

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The ninth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development includes in its programme of work a multi-stakeholder dialogue focusing on energy and transport as economic sectors. The dialogue will involve five key stakeholders, namely, representatives of energy and transport-related businesses, trade unions from the energy and transport sectors, non-governmental organizations, local authorities, and scientific and technological communities working on energy and transport-related fields. In addition, the stakeholder delegations will be formed on the basis of gender and geographical balance ensuring representation of stakeholders from developing countries and countries in transition.

2. The present segment, like previous multi-stakeholder dialogue segments, has been prepared via a multi-stakeholder steering group composed of network organizations from the five key major group sectors, namely, the International Chamber of Commerce, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the World Energy Council for business and industry; the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (through the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) for workers; the NGO Caucus on Energy and Climate Change and the NGO Caucus on Sustainable Transport for non-governmental organizations; the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives for local authorities; and the International Council of Scientific Unions and the World Conservation Union for scientific and technological communities. These network organizations facilitated the preparation of the "dialogue starter papers" (the five addenda to the present note) and consulted with their networks to identify their representatives and prepare them to participate in the dialogue.

3. The multi-stakeholder dialogue on sustainable energy and transport will be composed of four sessions focusing on the following specific themes:

Session I: Achieving equitable access to sustainable energy;

Session II: Sustainable choices for producing, distributing and consuming energy;

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Session III: Public-private partnerships to achieve sustainable energy for transport;

Session IV: Sustainable transport planning: choices and models for human settlements designs and vehicle alternatives.

4. The first hour of each dialogue session will be allocated to short presentations by the major groups on the key issues and proposals from their perspectives, followed by brief reactions from the Governments. The remainder of the session will be an open dialogue moderated by the Chairman of the Commission.

5. The multi-stakeholder dialogues became a standard part of the official work programme of the Commission at its sixth session with the first dialogue segment focusing on the role of industry in sustainable development. The dialogue segment was launched in response to a decision taken by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session (June 1997) that the Commission should strengthen its interaction with representatives of major groups, inter alia, through greater and better use of focused dialogue sessions (resolution S-19/2, annex, para. 133 (e)). The dialogue segments launched in 1998 have since been recognized as a unique participatory model for effectively engaging major groups and Governments in a genuine dialogue on specific sustainable development issues.

6. The outcome of the multi-stakeholder dialogues is a Chairman's summary which is included in the final report of the Commission on the session. In addition, many proposals made and discussed in the multi-stakeholder dialogue segment are taken on board in the negotiated decision of the Commission on the topic of the dialogue, allowing for meaningful and direct contributions by stakeholder groups to the decisions and work of the Commission. A third important outcome of the dialogues is the multi-stakeholder follow-up programmes that they generate within the context both of the work of the Commission and, gradually, of the work of the other United Nations organizations.

7. Further dissemination of the multi-stakeholder model in the area of sustainable energy and transport may be expected as a result of this dialogue segment. The form and content of such possible outcomes are dependent on the proposals made by the major groups and the extent to which the Commission decides to include them in the final decisions on energy and transport.

8. The multi-stakeholder dialogues have been recognized as a unique way to involve major groups in assessing progress in Agenda 21[1] implementation, building consensus on possible future actions and generating new partnerships for sustainable development. Such dialogues are planned as an integral part of the preparations for the upcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in 2002.

Notes

[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publications, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.